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LETTER DATED 30 APRIL 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On 27 April 1999, NATO planes struck downtown Surdulica several times. Vast destruction was done and many civilians were massacred. Twenty people lost their lives, including 12 children aged between 5 and 12, which may not be the final count. Five hundred private homes and apartments were destroyed in a town of about 15,000 inhabitants.

This last crime against humanity has increased once again the number of civilian victims of NATO aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; the "humanitarian bombings" have now claimed over 1,000 innocent civilian lives in cities, towns and villages all over Yugoslavia. The sorry tally is topped by Aleksinac, Cuprija, Kragujevac, Nis and Kursumlija, and includes the international passenger train in the Grdelica Gorge, destruction of Serbian Television, the bombing of the refugee convoy on the Djakovica-Pec road, and refugee camps throughout Serbia providing shelter to refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

Every sortie of a NATO plane dropping its deadly load on the people of Yugoslavia will forever be remembered as a rupture of the fabric of our civilization at the threshold of the twenty-first century. Calling these crimes "collateral damage" or "consequences of unintentional errors", NATO spokesmen have sunk to a frenzy of equivocation and hypocrisy in a futile effort to justify the unjustifiable. Against the backdrop of shattered homes, schools, hospitals, maternity wards, heating plants, bridges, churches or monasteries, their brazen claim that NATO is not at war with the Serbian people stands out as a unique testament of sophistry and callous vacuity.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has addressed the United Nations on a number of occasions, requesting it to exercise its duty and protect a victim of aggression. On each and every occasion, the world Organization has failed to heed the call. What else ought to take place to prod it into action, and is the systematic destruction of a country and its people's past, present and future not enough?

The Yugoslav side expects you to urgently condemn the most recent crime that NATO has committed against innocent civilians, and thus to render a contribution to putting an end to the brutal aggression and preventing further destruction and suffering.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Charge d'affaires a.i.